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seemed that the others present agreed with him, the leader would give in and have the crier announce the revised decision."

On the march, the leader went at the head of his band and showed the way. When several bands were together, the leader of one would have decided where he intended to go, and, if the other bands had decided to go along with this one, they followed, but were free to break away at any time.

The band to which either the Keeper of the Flat Pipe or the Keeper of the Feathered Pipe belonged had a certain distinction as there was a tendency when the tribe split for each to have a considerable following.

According to tradition, as related by The Boy, the Gros Ventres had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all the bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. Often the Keepers of the Sacred Pipes were present at such meetings called by the tribal chief, but if they were not present they were supposed to be kept advised.

The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It was said further that White Eagle was preceded by White Shield, of whom there are many stories extant, and that White Shield was preceded by Elk Going Against The Wind. The Boy gave the following information regarding the "election" of White Eagle. The account was given to The Boy by his father, Lame Bull, who had it from Old Man Gopher, a cousin of Lame Bull's paternal grandfather. "The Gros Ventres had been badly decimated by smallpox and only about 30 lodges were left.[8] Old Man Gopher and his sister, both of them very young children at the time, were the only survivors of their family. The old men among the survivors of the tribe got together and proceeded to choose a chief. White Eagle was then a young man

[8] A reasonable chronological estimate would identify this as a tradition referring to the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1780. For historical data, see p. 9.

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and he knew that the old men were meeting. When he was called in he wondered 'Why do they call a man so young as I?' But after White Eagle accepted the pipe and prayed with it,—thus accepting the office,—all said 'Ai-e-e-e-.' Then White Eagle called one of the attendants: 'I am through praying. Come and get this pipe.' The attendant got up and took it to the first band chief to the left of the door as one entered the lodge. The band chief lit the pipe, said prayers to White Man Above, passed it to the next man on his left who likewise smoked, prayed and passed the pipe on until it reached the last man to the right of the door. Then the pipe was passed back, with no smoking except by the two Keepers of the two Sacred Pipes who were present, and then the two attendants and the announcer smoked. After that, they smoked socially and told stories until White Eagle got up to talk and told what he thought should be done, what would be for the good of the people.

"When White Eagle accepted the pipe he said, addressing the old man who had gathered the others together: 'Old man, I accept the pipe. I accept it with my whole heart. I am a young man, I am rather backward about everything. But since you chose me to be your head chief I take it with good will. Since I've done what you have asked me, in return I'm going to ask you to do everything I request. Don't refuse me. Don't think because I'm a young man what I say may be taken lightly. Now we've had smallpox and there are many dead. Among the living are many single men and single women. This very night I want each man to select a wife or each woman to select a husband—this very night I want *every* man and woman to marry. If this is done in a few years our old numbers will be restored. After the men and women get together we'll move to where there are buffalo. We will kill buffalo and tan the hides for lodges and bedding for these couples and, after this is done, we'll cut poles for the lodges, so each new married couple will have a home of their own. If we do this our population will increase fast.' After this speech White Eagle told the announcer to tell the people what he had just said and to tell the women not to refuse the men who ask them, and the men not to refuse the women who ask them. So the announcer told all this in the name of White Eagle, the head chief from then on. All was carried out as he had ordered and in a few years the population had

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very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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INTRODUCTION.

The following information on the Gros Ventre was collected in the winter and early spring of 1901, at the Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana, as part of the Mrs. Morris K. Jesup Expedition. Very few of the statements made, unless such is obviously the case, are based on observation. In general, where nothing is said to the contrary, they are founded on statements made by the Indians. The introductory explanations that have been made in regard to the Arapaho[1] apply also to the following material. The alphabet used for rendering Gros Ventre words is the same as that employed for Arapaho. Additional sounds are ö and ü; which are open, and k', a palatal k.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre call themselves "Haānininin." The meaning of this term is sometimes given as "lime-men" or "chalk-men," from haā'a"tyi ("lime" or "soft white stone"). This etymology is, however, doubtful. In literature they have often been known as the "Atsina." They declare this to be the Piegan name for themselves, atsöna". Historically the Gros Ventre are known to have formed an independent tribe closely associated with the Blackfeet during the nineteenth century. Their dialect is similar to the Arapaho, and certainly intelligible to the Arapaho for at least the greater part. The two dialects are, however, sufficiently differentiated to make it certain that the tribes have been more or less distinct for a longer period than two centuries. The Arapaho regard the Gros Ventre as the northernmost one of a group of five closely affiliated or related tribes of which they themselves form the largest. Three of these tribes have long been extinct as separate bodies, and only the dialects of one or two survive among a few individuals with the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, perhaps

[1] A. L. Kroeber, The Arapaho (Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Parts I, II, and IV. New York, 1902, 1904, and 1907). A series of Gros Ventre myths and tales has been published in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. I, Part III. New York, 1907.

[P. 144 Contains no Text]

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because they have among them no such remnants of perishing tribes, appear to know nothing of this fivefold group, but they recognize their close relationship to the Arapaho. There is no very great amount of intercourse between them and the Arapaho at present, nor does there appear to have been any unusual amount of communication during the greater part of the nineteenth century; but on both sides there is a mutual recognition as of separated relatives. The Arapaho are now and apparently have been for a long time considerably the larger tribe, the Gros Ventre having always in historical times been regarded as a small body. Their present number is about 550.

According to Hayden, the Gros Ventre, about 1800, were south of the Saskatchewan; about 1820 they united with the Arapaho for a few years, and then, following a quarrel, journeyed north, had a disastrous encounter with the Crow, and became neighbors and allies of the Blackfeet.[1] In spite of the usually close association of the Gros Ventre with the three Blackfoot tribes since that time, they became hostile to them for a time, about forty years ago, and united against them with their own long-standing enemies the Crow. In the course of this hostility the Gros Ventre sustained their heaviest reverse in war within their memory; the greater part of an unusually large war-party, including many Crow, being killed after an attack on a Piegan camp. This happened in 1867, according to Grinnell. The usual enemies of the Gros Ventre, besides the Crow, were other Siouan tribes, such as the Dakota and especially the Assiniboine. They also fought more or less with the Shoshone, and no doubt in alliance with the Blackfeet against the Salish Flathead. They were on the whole friendly with the tribes of their own stock of speech, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, and Cree. The habitat of the Gros Ventre in recent times has been the Milk River territory, in which is situated their present reservation, which they occupy jointly with the Assiniboine.

The Gros Ventre have also been called Fall, Rapid, and Paunch Indians. The term "Gros Ventre" has also been applied to the Minitari, a Siouan village tribe on the Missouri; and the two tribes have been distinguished as "Gros Ventre of the Prairie" and "Gros Ventre of the Missouri."

Gros Ventre tradition brings the tribe from the north; but their story of the division of the tribe while crossing the ice on a great river is found also among the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne, and is worthless as historical evidence. While their earliest habitat known is north of their present territory, acquaintance of them goes back little more than a century, and there is

[1] See the excellent article by H. L. Scott on The Early History and the Names of the Arapaho, in the American Anthropologist, N.S., IX, 545, 1907. From this it appears that, at least from the middle of the eighteenth century on, except for about five years' association with the Arapaho (from 1818 to 1823), the habitat of the Gros Ventre was in the Blackfoot country, between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri.

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nothing to show that they had long been in the Saskatchewan region. All that is certain of their previous past is their closer relationship to the Arapaho than to any other tribe; and the origin of the Arapaho is equally obscure, except that it is certain that, if they came from the north and east, it was a long time ago. Of the Gros Ventre it can only be said that, while related to the Arapaho and regarded by them as almost politically a part of themselves, they were far separated from them when first known, with them for a short time later, and again separated, and in contact and alliance with another much more distantly related Algonkin branch. Their habitat in a hundred years has been successively near the Saskatchewan, the Platte, and the Missouri. There is nothing to show that such variability of affiliation and location within the culture region of the Plains has not been characteristic of their previous history.

The Gros Ventre call the tribes near them by the following names: Arapaho, hinan'ăn (in Arapaho, hinanaei-na"); Cheyenne, itisŏn, "scars" (itisŏ", "a scar;" Arapaho name of the Cheyenne, hitaciina"); Cree, na"tsa", "rabbits;" Ojibwa, djinhuna"tsa", "Lower Cree;" the three Blackfoot tribes, waotä"nixtäats, "black-feet" (a Blackfoot, waotä"nixtänin, "blackfoot-man;" a Piegan, -tsä"t'; the Bloods, ka"winähää"); Assiniboine, na"djinethin; Sioux, na"wina"djinei, "Below-Assiniboine" (in Arapaho, na"tinei, "a Sioux"); Crow, hounen, "crow-men;" Minitari, wuxnokayan, "—lodges;" Shoshone, sŏsŏuyänin, "snake-men;" Bannock, waotä"nixiinin, "black-men" (in Arapaho the Ute are called wootänähiçi, "black"); Flathead Salish, kaakaäänin, "flathead-man;" Nezpercé, taniibats, "pierced-nose" (Arapaho taniibääçi is the Caddo). Two tribes to the southwest or perhaps west, which have not been identified, are the wasŏi"hiiyeihits, "grass-dwellers," who live in houses of grass or brush; and the na"wuxaniibiina"ts, "fish-eaters."

The Gros Ventre were divided into groups similar to those of the Blackfeet and Sioux. The names of these bands were nicknames, and in no way totemic. As there was prohibition of marriage within the band, the name "clan" is, however, applicable to them. Descent was paternal and a man belonged to his father's band; but the prohibition of marriage extended also to his mother's clan, all the members of both the father's and mother's clan being considered relatives. Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief. During the winter the tribe broke into smaller groups, consisting of one or perhaps more clans, which followed the buffalo, and camped chiefly in the timber. There corrals were made for the horses at night to prevent their being stolen by war-parties. When summer came, the clans joined and camped together in the large camp-circle. In this, the opening of which was toward the east, the different bands had definite

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side of the bundle, it is said. Except at such ceremonies as this, only the keeper could touch the pipe.

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Pipes were sometimes given to other tribes, and were sometimes received from them. Sometimes they were carried by war-parties. One of the three pipes still in existence is said to have been given by the Cheyenne to the Crow, and by the latter to the Gros Ventre, when peace was made between the two tribes. The stem is ornamented with feathers, weasel-skins, and at the end with a bunch of eagle-feathers. The sacred pipes were kept wrapped in many pieces of skin or cloth, and hung up in the tent. In good weather they were hung on a stand of three or four sticks, behind the tent. The keepers of the sacred pipes observed stringent rules. They could not eat of the head or back of any animal, nor of any part of the white-tailed deer, nor any eggs. They were not allowed to bathe, or to paint (except red), or to take the ashes out of the tent. They had to smoke in certain ways. They did not eat dogs, or allow them in the tent; nor did they let dogs touch them, or walk over their legs, or walk before them, while they were smoking. The keepers of the sacred pipes wore their hair uncut and uncombed. They could not cut it until they had given the pipe to another keeper. The hair was worn tied in a bunch just above the forehead. Fig. 42 shows such a bunch of matted hair, said to have been that of the grandfather of the father of the man who was the oldest in the tribe in 1901. This former keeper of the pipe became so old that he lost most of his hair, and the bunch shown was cut off by him before it should drop off. To this hair the later owner of the pipe, his present great-grandson, tied the first of his own teeth to fall out from old age: they are contained in a small cloth sack.

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Fig. 42 (50-1902). Matted Hair. Length, 41 cm.

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INTRODUCTION

The Algonquian-speaking Gros Ventres live on the Fort Belknap Reservation in North Central Montana. The Reservation is a small part of the land claimed by this tribe in 1887, when the boundaries were finally fixed. At present, the Gros Ventres number between a thousand and eleven hundred, and they share their territory with almost as many Assiniboine. The latter tribe was included in the settlement of the Reservation although it did not participate with the Gros Ventres and Blackfoot tribes in the Treaty of 1855. In spite of some intermarriage, the two groups have never really blended and the Gros Ventres tend to center at the village of Hays at the southern part of the Reservation while the Assinboine are clustered around Lodge Pole, a settlement some ten miles east of Hays. The Indian Agency is approximately forty miles north of Hays at the northern boundary of the Reservation and close to the town of Harlem on the Great Northern Railroad. Of importance to the Gros Ventres, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, is St. Paul's Mission and School which lie at the foot of the Little Rockies only a mile south of Hays. David Rodnick has given an excellent description of the geographical setting of the Reservation for his study of modern conditions and of acculturation among the Fort Belknap Assiniboine.

Of the several tribes in the Northern Plains region, the Gros Ventres are perhaps the least known. Although they maintained intact their tribal identity, and were recognized as fierce warriors, they were often mistakenly identified with the Blackfoot tribes, with whom they were frequently allied. Moreover, little was known of the Gros Ventre language except that it was an exceedingly difficult one; practically every independent observer during the nineteenth century remarks on this fact. Since, however, many Gros Ventre men knew Blackfoot, the linguistic difference was often overlooked and the Gros Ventres tended to be counted as one of the Blackfoot tribes. As part of the so-called "Blackfoot Nation," leaders of the Gros Ventres signed the Treaty of 1855.

[P. viii contains no text]

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175 before approaching. It is true that peaceful relations of some Assiniboine, with "Archithinue natives (their friends) two days journey beyond Manitow-Sakahegan," are mentioned.[19] From the location of Manitou Lake it is probable that these were Blackfoot, although Cocking does not specify the tribe in this instance. Then, as later, peace on the northern plains was of short duration. Graham, for instance, in 1775 writes regarding the Assiniboine: [648] "War is their delight and the Archithenues the objects of their inveterate enemity, from these poor creatures they take the fine Horses so frequent among them and which serve to convey their baggage about the country."[20]

175 It is significant, too, for intertribal relations that the Indians 648 whom the Cree-Assiniboine dreaded to meet, as they accompanied Cocking out into the plains, were the Snake. On August 24th, 1772, the hunters of his party on the South Saskatchewan River, reported having seen several horses up the branch on the other side, and Cocking remarks: "They are all in general afraid, supposing the horses to belong to the Snake Indians with whom they are always at variance." Again, on September 16th, they saw a strange horse and "supposed it to belong to the Snake, their enemies." Finally, on the last day on which the Water-falls Indians were with Cocking's party, "three Archithinue natives of the same tribe" came from the westward to say that buffalo were scarce and that their countrymen were going to war with the Snake Indians.[21] This bears out the very definite tradition current among the Gros Ventres today that they had to drive the Snake from the territory which they occupied.

Lewis, in his reconstruction of the early history of the Blackfoot, maintains that the Piegan had driven the Kutenai and Snake across the mountains by about 1750.[22] A careful reading of Thompson's account of Piegan history, as given to him in 1786–87 by the old Cree Saukamapee, indicates that while the Piegan had been gaining ground from the Snake since the 1730's, their advance may not have been as rapid as Lewis has suggested. The Piegan

[19] Cocking, p. 106.
[20] Graham's Observations of 1775, in Isham, p. 311.
[21] Cocking, pp. 103, 106, 112.
[22] O. Lewis, pp. 13, 15, and Map B.

21 Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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were said to have reached the Stag (Red Deer) River when both they and the Snake were decimated by a smallpox epidemic,[33] which would seem to have been that of 1780. For the next three years there were no wars, as the remnants of both tribes were occupied in merely sustaining life—parties of young Snake men were left unmolested by the Piegan. It was then decided that in future warfare, instead of looking only for the honor of taking scalps, that the Piegan should capture women and young men and adopt them in order to augment their depleted numbers. Apparently the Piegan gradually advanced to the Bow River as the Snake withdrew. Thompson, then among the Piegan at the Bow River, states: "The country where the Snake now [i.e. 1786] are is far away and little known to the Peeagan." Scouts were out five days but saw no Snake. "Affairs were in this state when we arrived."[34] A few days later a war chief with fifty warriors was sent out to examine the country. This party returned after about twenty days with five horses and fifteen mules which they had captured from the Snake, and old Saukamapee's son gave an account of the expedition. If this chronology is correct, Cocking's companions in 1772 had every reason to fear the Snake and to suspect their presence, as the power of the latter would not have been broken in the northern plains until 1780.

Cocking, as others before him, failed in his mission to persuade the "equestrian Indians" to come to Hudson's Bay.[35] During the last two decades of the 18th century, the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the rival Northwest Company, established trading

[33] Thompson, p. 336. We know nothing of the wider effects of the smallpox epidemic which affected the Cree in 1736. Cf. Mandelbaum, p. 182.

[34] Thompson, p. 340. The author, pp. 328–47, in giving the account of old Saukamapee, often quotes the latter directly. But inasmuch as he usually omits important diacritical marks, and intersperses comments of his own, care must be exercised in reading these pages which recount events extending in time from about 1730 up to include a few weeks after Thompson's arrival among the Piegan in 1786. Furthermore, he wrote his whole Narrative about 1839, at the age of 70, following his notebooks it is true, but also making generalizations regarding the Piegan which do not necessarily refer to the year 1786–87 he spent among them, but may indicate a later date. See p. 348 where he describes boundaries of the Piegan, Blood and Blackfoot territory.

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[35] Cocking p. 111. Cf. Graham's Observations in Isham, p. 312.

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posts accessible to the Blackfoot and to the Gros Ventres. So long as the Cree and the friendly Assiniboine were appreciably better armed than the other tribes on the northern plains, the traders had little to fear. But now, with the acquisition of more guns by the buffalo hunters, and with the increasing appetite of the latter, not only for still more firearms but for other items, especially spiritous liquors, they became more and more troublesome and it was necessary to fortify the trading posts.

Since the demand was mainly for beaver, and the Cree were the real trappers, they were particularly favored by the traders. Umfreville (1784–88) complains that both the Gros Ventres and the Blackfoot tribes bring in by far too many wolf skins, and says specifically of the Gros Ventres that they seem not yet initiated into the manner of hunting and killing beaver, dressing skins and killing small peltry.[36] Mackenzie from his observations in 1789 gives the impression that the buffalo hunters were little interested in trading at the posts, and states that the part of the Gros Ventres, who were with the Assiniboine on the plains near the central portion of the Assiniboine River, prepared fresh and dried buffalo meat and tallow, along with a few buffalo robes and wolf skins, to exchange for "arms and ammunition, rum, tobacco, knives and various baubles," with those who go to traffic with them.[37]

Mackenzie gives also the relative position and size of the northern plains groups. Some Cree-Assiniboine are mentioned by him as being at Nepawi and South Branch House, and whose territory extends upward about to the Eagle Hills. Next to them are the Cree about eighty tents and on the other side of the river their number may be 200. Mandelbaum cites this evidence to show that at this time the Cree were along the north Saskatchewan, but had not yet consolidated their position there.[38] Mackenzie goes on to say that at the southern headwaters of the North Saskatchewan dwell the Sarsi, 35 tents, 120 men; opposite to those eastward on the headwaters of the South Branch are the Piegan, 1200–1500 men; next to them on the same water, are the Blood,

[36] Umfreville, p. 198.
[37] Mackenzie, v. 1, pp. cxl, cili.
[38] Mandelbaum, pp. 181–82.

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50 tents or 250 men; next to them downward extend the Blackfeet, their number may be 800 men; next to them and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall or Big Bellied Indians, who may amount to about 600 warriors.[29]

Dislocation and Warfare (1790–1830)

Within a decade of the time of Mackenzie's observations, however, the Gros Ventres were being ousted from between the forks of the Saskatchewan where they had been apparently well established since at least 1772, when Cocking met them.[30] Undoubtedly the Gros Ventres were greatly weakened by the smallpox epidemic of 1780, as Wissler has suggested.[31] In any case they were subsequently pushed south and east by the allied Assiniboine and Cree, who had the great advantage of being relatively well-armed with guns. Thus the Gros Ventres were launched on the most turbulent period of their career, with enmity toward the whites as an important factor.

We know from Harmon how bitterly the Gros Ventres resented the more favorable treatment accorded the Cree-Assiniboine by the traders. He was at Alexandria, a Northwest Company post on the Assiniboine River, and records on June 10, 1801, the following: "It is currently reported and believed that the Rapid Indians are forming a war party to come against the Indians of this quarter, whom they consider, and I think with sufficient reason, as their enemies. If they come this way they will fall on us as upon the natives themselves, for they say that we furnish the Cree and Assiniboine with what firearms they want, while they get few."[32] Although this particular attack on the post did not materialize, there was real reason to have feared it. In the summer of 1793 the Gros Ventres attacked old fort Brulé (South Branch House) and killed all but one of the twenty or so inhabitants; in 1794 they pillaged Manchester House. These two

[29] Mackenzie, v. 1, p. cx.

[30] O. Lewis p. 12, places them East of the South Branch prior to about 1750.

[31] Wissler, 1936, p. 18. Cf. interesting tradition of the ravages of the epidemic; pp. 34–36.

[32] Harmon, p. 51.

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175 acts of depredation were long remembered and formed the basis for the bad reputation the Gros Ventres sustained among the ● 648 traders. Henry, speaking of them in 1808 as an audacious and turbulent race, says that they have repeatedly attempted to massacre the traders.[83]

During the early part of the nineteenth century the Gros Ventres continued losing ground to the Assiniboine and Cree. Harmon, again in 1801, mentions, for instance, that a party of Cree-Assiniboine had left Fort Alexandria in June against the Rapid Indians and were bringing a number of women and children for "slaves." [84] In 1803 he records that 40 lodges of Cree-Assiniboine went out on a war party with 40 lodges of "others," apparently against both the Blackfoot and Rapid Indians.[85] Incidentally, as the Gros Ventres were pushed out of the Saskatchewan basin, they no longer formed a buffer between the Cree-Assiniboine and Blackfoot, and these latter came into more direct and deadly conflict. Having rebuilt South Branch House in 1805, Harmon was there in April 1806 when the Cree-Assiniboine in that region went to war against the Rapid Indians, "their inveterate enemies, with whom they frequently patch up peace which is generally short endurance." [86] In August of that same year some Assiniboine reported to Harmon that about 80 tents of Cree-Assiniboine, with about as many of the Blackfoot, were on their way to war against the Gros Ventres. Nothing came of this expedition, however, inasmuch as the temporary allies began quarreling over a horse which each claimed and ended in an all-day fight between them.[87]

And so it went. By 1808 the Gros Ventres had been replaced in [131] the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade. Henry remarks that at this time they were bringing to Fort Vermillion a good trade in dried provisions, beaver skins, and grizzly bear and buffalo

[83] Henry, v. 2, p. 530.
[84] Harmon, p. 55.
[85] *Idem*, p. 78.
[86] *Idem*, p. 119.
[87] *Idem*, p. 120.

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robes,—that the Gros Ventres were industrious and were as good skin-dressers as the Mandan and better than the Blackfoot. He further mentions that they were formerly numerous and dreaded but that since the smallpox, and the depredations by the tribes with whom they have been at variance, they had diminished. Although they formerly had bloody wars with the Blackfoot tribes, in 1808 they were at peace with them.

Henry's estimate, however, that at this time the Gros Ventres numbered but 80 tents or 240 men, seems very low.[38] He was probably basing his figures on those who came that far north to trade, because in 1805 Laroque, while with the Crow on an island in the Missouri River near the confluence of the Big Horn, met a delegation of the Gros Ventres who were camped on the Big Horn River behind the mountain. He states that they occupied 275–300 "huts" and that it was with friendly sentiments that they came to this region. They brought words of peace and said that they came to procure some horses from the Crow. Laroque referred to them as "Big bellies of the fort de prairie" and mentioned that they and the Crow communicated with each other by means of the sign language, not being able to understand each other in speech.[39] This makes it quite certain that these Indians were not the Hidatsa.

It would seem, then, from the above as well as from the figures obtained in the same year, 1805, by Lewis and Clark, viz. 260 tents or 660 men,[40] that the estimates of both Thompson and Henry, observing as they were from the Canadian area from which the Gros Ventres had been driven, refer to only part of the main group of Gros Ventres. Henry himself remarks in 1811 that the Gros Ventres are increasing very fast and that he had always noticed a greater percentage of young men among them than among the neighboring tribes. He admits further: "I have not been able to obtain their exact number but am fully confident they exceed 100 tents."[41] Richardson, moreover, in his journal of 1818–19, identifies the Gros Ventres and claims that they have about 450 to 500 tents.[42]

[38] Henry, v. 2, pp. 530–31.
[39] Laroque, p. 20.
[40] Cf. Wissler, 1936, p. 4.
[41] Henry, v. 2, p. 733.
[42] Richardson, quoted in Franklin, pp. 99–100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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During the second decade of the nineteenth century the American fur companies were beginning to show an active interest in the upper Missouri region. As Lewis has pointed out, there were certain differences between the methods used by the companies in Canada and those in the United States.[43] The Americans sent out trappers to hunt the streams for beaver rather than depending on the Indians to bring the pelts to the posts, as did the Canadian companies. The Gros Ventres as well as the Blackfoot resented the invasion of white trappers. To give but a single instance, in the summer of 1810 the Gros Ventres fell on a party of American freemen from Illinois whom they murdered and plundered of their possessions, including beaver skins which were marked and numbered. The Bloods were at war at the same time on the Missouri and murdered a party of Americans. Henry states: "The Bloods in general bear fully as bad reputation as the Fall Indians. They are fully as vicious, bloodthirsty, and turbulent, but, I believe, not so brave."[44]

Still another element which added appreciably to the difficulties of the Gros Ventres, in these first decades of the 19th century, was their increasing conflict with the numerous and powerful Crow. As they continually lost territory to the Cree-Assiniboine, it was not long before they were encroaching on the Crow, who promptly retaliated. It was largely the threat of the Crow to ally themselves with the Americans, in an offensive against the Gros Ventres, that fed the determination of the latter to again raid the Canadian posts. They were desperate for guns and ammunition and felt themselves unable to obtain them through regular trade. The Piegan, in order to protect their own trading interests, promised aid to the Gros Ventres, in case of attack by the Crow, and succeeded in temporarily pacifying them.[45]

In any case, the Gros Ventres were probably responsible for the abandonment of Chesterfield House, which had been rebuilt, after the amalgamation in 1822 of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, at the mouth of the Red Deer River which empties into the South Branch of the Saskatchewan. It was

[43] O. Lewis, pp. 23–31.
[44] Henry, v. 2, 735–36.
[45] Henry, v. 2, 718–21.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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seemingly after the pillaging of this fort about 1826 that part of the Gros Ventres fled to the headwaters of the Missouri, wintered there, and then proceeded south to join their Arapaho kinsmen. According to Hayden, the Gros Ventres spent about five years hunting with the Arapaho and joined them in trading with the Mexicans.[46] During this sojourn, the Gros Ventres suffered a devastating attack of smallpox which was said to have reduced their number by half.

From sources independent of Hayden we know that a large group of Gros Ventres was actually in the Cimarron area during the late 1820's. Gregg, with a party of independent traders, was traveling in the Cimarron Valley when on June 21, 1831, they met a very large group of Indians,—he estimates about a thousand including men, women and children,—who followed them for a day or two in order to pilfer what they could and to receive presents if possible. They were finally bought off with about sixty dollars worth of trade goods contributed by various members of the party. It was thought at first that these Indians were Comanche and Arapaho. "But," states Gregg, "they were principally if not altogether Blackfoot and Gros Ventres." A few days later Gregg received intelligence that Captain Sublette and his party, on their way from St. Louis to Santa Fe, had met "an immense horde of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres," and that although the Indians had assumed a menacing attitude, the party had passed without serious molestation. That same evening, however, Gregg camped near a place called the "Battle Ground," famous for a skirmish which a caravan of traders in the company of Mexican troops had in 1829 with the Gros Ventres. Gregg was told that on that occasion, the traders and troops, under Col. Vizcarra, were camped on the Cimarron when a party of 120 Gros Ventres approached on foot. The traders did not welcome the Indians, but seeing that they were disposed to remain until morning, Col. Vizcarra promised to disarm them. Nevertheless he failed to do so, and all of a sudden the Indians sprang to their feet, gave a yell and fired on the party. A Taos Indian, by giving his own life, saved that of the Colonel. The Mexican troops pursued the Gros

[46] Hayden, 341. The gist of what Hayden gives for this period is correct, though his dates are inaccurate.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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Ventres, killing and wounding a considerable number of them, but losing a captain and two or three privates.[47]

An interesting version of why the Gros Ventres parted with the Arapaho was related to Hayden by an Arapaho, named Friday, at Fort Laramie when the former was there in 1859–60. Friday stated that the Arapaho and Gros Ventres were camped together on the Cimarron where the Mexicans usually came to trade with them. On this particular occasion the chief of the Gros Ventres wanted all of the trade, whereas the chief of the Arapaho suggested that half of the traders should go to the Gros Ventres and the other half should trade with the Arapaho. An altercation between the two chiefs followed during which the chief of the Gros Ventres stabbed the chief of the Arapaho. The brothers and sons of the latter promptly retaliated by killing the Gros Ventre chief. Whereupon a battle ensued, but peace was made before many were killed. So the two tribes decided to separate, the Arapaho ranging along the S. Platte and Arkansas, the Gros Ventres passing through North Park to Bridger's Pass and thence along the west side of the Rockies to the region of the Three Tetons.[48]

Whether or not this was the actual cause for the separation,—and it sounds reasonable enough,—it is certain that the Gros Ventres did go north giving trouble to the whites along the headwaters of the Snake and Greene Rivers, and engaging some trappers who had met at a trading rendezvous at Pierre's Hole in the summer of 1832. Hayden has given an account of the battle and others refer to it, but Chittenden presents the most detailed description, having gathered together contemporary newspaper accounts, and so on. His version, with which Hayden's in general agrees, is that The Rocky Mountain traders under William L. Sublette, and those of the American Fur Company under Fontanelle, met at Pierre's Hole in the Teton Basin in July 1832. There were many hundreds of Indians in the valley, mostly Flathead and Nez Percé. When the business of the rendezvous was almost finished, a group under M. G. Sublette set out toward the main Snake River and camped for the night not far from the place of the rendezvous. The next morning a band of Gros

[47] Gregg, pp. 227–28, 231–32, 239.
[48] Hayden, p. 322.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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Ventres approached in two parties, about 150 men, carrying with them a Hudson's Bay Company flag which they had taken from a party of Hudson Bay Company trappers whom they had recently defeated. The Gros Ventres made signs of truce, but the whites did not trust them and, as a Gros Ventre chief approached the party alone, a Flathead, by prearranged signal, shot him. The Gros Ventres withdrew to a copse and entrenched themselves, the women doing the work while the men held the firing line.

Sublette sent for reinforcements and his brother, William L. Sublette, came with Campbell and others. William Sublette and Campbell led a direct attack on the Gros Ventres entrenchments. The former was wounded and two of the others were killed. Finally Sublette decided, against the wishes of the friendly Indians, to burn the Gros Ventres out. One of the Flathead, who had communicated with the Gros Ventres, informed the whites that the Gros Ventres had 600–800 warriors who would arrive soon. The whites understood the Flathead to say that these warriors were attacking the main rendezvous camp at that moment, and so withdrew. The Gros Ventres fled. This was rated as one of the worst encounters of Indians and traders in the west. Five whites were killed and Sublette wounded; the Gros Ventres casualties are not exactly known, but they were said to have left nine dead warriors and 25 horses together with nearly all of their baggage in the "fort." Later on, when leaving the rendezvous, a party of whites was attacked, two being killed and one wounded. Sublette saw the large body of whom the Gros Ventres had spoken, but they did not attack, and the Gros Ventres finally left the country via the Wind River.[49]

This was not the end of difficulties for the Gros Ventres, however. Chittenden merely states that they then had a serious encounter with the Crow and were scattered over Crow territory. Hayden gives us more details which he apparently had from the Gros Ventres themselves as well as from traders.[50] It seems that the Crow were in the habit of visiting the Flathead to trade for horses and this summer of 1832 they were returning to their country in two groups. The Gros Ventres, without realizing that

[49] Chittenden, v. 2, pp. 657-62.
[50] Hayden, p. 342.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Crow were in the vicinity, camped at a place through which the first contingent of Crow had already passed. Four young men from the second division of Crow were attempting to catch up with the first when they came across the Gros Ventres camp, thinking they had reached their goal. The Gros Ventres seized and killed three of these young men, but the fourth escaped to warn his people, who laid in ambush at a narrow pass through which the Gros Ventres would go. Taking the Gros Ventres by surprise, they completely demoralized them, killing 67 and capturing twice that many women and children. The remainder fled and reached safety with the Blackfoot, leaving the wounded where they lay.

Readjustment (1830–1870)

That the whole Gros Ventres tribe could have gone south to the Arapaho, remained a few years, and suffered such disasters in 1832, is highly improbable. First of all, it is unlikely that if the whole tribe disappeared from their usual habitat they would have been able to regain their territory from encroachments by Assiniboine from the east and northeast, by Crow from the south, and by Piegan and Blackfoot from the west and northwest. Furthermore it is equally unlikely that such absence would have been unnoted by Catlin who in 1832, at the American Fur Company Post at the mouth of the Yellowstone, gives a reasonable estimate of the Gros Ventre population (430 lodges) and notes the common error of traders in counting that tribe indiscriminately with the Blackfoot groups, in spite of the difference between the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre language.[51] Moreover, according to Maximilian, Mitchell of the American Fur Company affirmed in 1833 that he had always done business with the Gros Ventres with pleasure, and had never had any proof of the treachery imputed to them. Had there been no Gros Ventres around for five years, Mitchell would no doubt have mentioned that fact. The entire feeling of Maximilian's account is that the Gros Ventres were well known to American Fur Company traders—as compared to some Blackfoot proper, who arrived at the fort and were unknown.[52]

Finally, native tradition gives some negative evidence. Our

[51] Catlin, v. 1, pp. 59–60.
[52] Maximilian, pp. 73, 154.

2: Flannery E-5' (1940-1948) 1953
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older informants at the present time belong to the bands known as the Frozens, the Tendons, and the Upper Quarters. If the entire tribe had gone on such a visit to the Arapaho, it is almost certain that some tradition of this travel would have been passed on, as it would have occurred in the lifetime of Coming Daylight's grandmother and of The Boy's father, from both of whom these informants had much reliable material. It thus seems more likely that several bands—perhaps in population amounting to as much as half the total tribe—went on the expedition together. It was customary for the Gros Ventres to split into smaller groups and for several bands to winter together. It would seem probable that one or two such smaller groups pillaged the Hudson's Bay Company post in the late 1820's, wintered together on the upper Missouri, and then traveled south to the Arapaho.

While part of the Gros Ventres tribe was with the Arapaho, the remainder,—roaming the strip of plains between the Blackfoot groups on the west, the Assiniboine on the east, and the Crow on the south,—managed to improve their situation somewhat. Although the whole tribe was probably reunited by 1833, when Maximilian gives us an account of his meeting with them, they were fairly prosperous in spite of the losses sustained by those who had fought at Pierre's Hole and had then been ambushed by the Crow. Maximilian states specifically that " these Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents and could not buy firearms; they have, however, recovered of late and supplied their wants." [68] One of our informants told us that she had heard often, when she was a child, that in her grandmother's young days,—which we estimate as the early years of the 19th century—the Gros Ventres were very badly off and had so few horses that they used dog transport almost exclusively, but that the situation gradually improved, and, by the time our informant was born (ca. 1855), they again had many horses, a sign of prosperity. From Maximilian's description and from Bradley's estimate of the situation in the early 1830's, it would seem that there was no dearth of either horses or firearms among the Gros Ventres at that time. Maximilian states, however, that they showed the effect of their encounters with the Crow by a noticeable disproportion of the sexes, and that

[68] Maximilian, p. 75.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

175 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors
648 from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the
[439] Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the
[431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603; Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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more dependent on trading as their thirst for liquor became greater and greater.

At the time of which we are speaking, 1833, the Gros Ventres and Piegan were at least temporarily at peace. The Assiniboine, however, were strong and, with the Cree, were raiding deep into Gros Ventres territory. They were likewise at enmity with the Piegan. Poorly mounted as they were, they were bold enough to attack Fort McKenzie in 1833, and were driven off by the whites, with very little assistance from the Piegan who were there at the time. The next fall apparently this same band of Cree-Assiniboine cut off sixty lodges of Gros Ventres in the Sweet Grass Hills and the Gros Ventres lost 400, only one escaping to tell the tale.[58]

The Crow, too, were being very troublesome and Bradley describes their siege of Fort McKenzie in 1834.[59] The traders on this occasion finally resorted to firing a cannon which frightened the Crow. To wipe out their disgrace in running away, the Crow rallied under their leader Rotten Belly, and resolved to make an expedition against the Blackfoot. They came across a dozen Gros Ventres warriors, however, near the Fort and satisfied their honor by killing them instead of the Blackfoot. Nevertheless the Gros Ventres had fought bravely and inflicted losses upon the Crow, including their chief who, when he was dying from the wounds, told his people never to attack the whites again. Bradley tells us that the Crow kept to this advice. Nevertheless they continued giving trouble to the Gros Ventres. Bradley says in 1835 that war continued to rage as fiercely as ever. For example, the Gros Ventres killed 40 Crow who had tried to steal their horses near the Fort; some months later they again got the best of a raiding expedition of Crow.[60]

In building up to the position they maintained in 1855, the Gros Ventres were undoubtedly able to profit from the effects of the great smallpox epidemic of 1837–38 which wreaked such havoc among all the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine, but which left the Gros Ventres and Crow relatively untouched. Bradley gives

[58] Bradley, 219.
[59] Bradley, p. 216.
[60] Bradley, p. 219. For an account of present Gros Ventre tradition of the first of these two battles, see pp. 94–96.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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an account of the terrible number of deaths among the Blackfoot in 1838 and states that the northern Assiniboine lost two-thirds of their number. He says of the Gros Ventres however that they escaped very lightly, their entire loss being less than 200. "This is to be attributed to their being in a measure innoculated by previous experience with the disease communicated by the Arapahoes in a visit to the south."[61] It may be recalled that Hayden mentions the epidemic which struck the Gros Ventres when they were among the Arapaho. Both are probably referring to the severe, but more or less localized, epidemic which hit the Indians of the Kansas Territory in 1829. Hayden, referring to the five year period during which the Gros Ventres hunted and traded along with the Arapahos—says that during this time: "Smallpox passed among them, having been communicated to them through other tribes with whom they were at peace or carried on a traffic. This disease, at that time, destroyed about half their number, but secured the remainder from the next attack which occurred in 1838. At this later period the smallpox only acted on the young, and destroyed a number of them, but the chiefs and elderly men escaped so that the tribe was not reduced to the disorderly and helpless condition of the Blackfoot and other surrounding nations."[62] That the Blackfoot groups were disorganized to a large extent is borne out by a completely independent source. Father Mengarini in 1841 notes the troublesome raids by the Blackfoot, around St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads on the Bitter Root River, and adds: "Had not pestilence decimated the tribe the year before our arrival, our mission at St. Mary's would have been impossible."[63]

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In the 1840's, then, the Gros Ventres had only one full-strength enemy to contend with, namely, the Crow. Presumably, they took advantage of the opportunity to raid extensively both the Blackfoot groups and the Assiniboine. Nevertheless they evidently continued to keep up their good relations with the whites. Father Point, S.J., who spent the fall and winter of 1846–47 among the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres wrote to Father de Smet regarding

[61] Bradley, p. 226.
[62] Hayden, p. 341.
[63] Mengarini, p. 8.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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the latter tribe that they appeared to him "to have the advantage of the others in being more adroit, more docile, and more courageous; but they are more attached to their old superstitions and are terrible *demanders*, as the Canadian employees here call shameless beggars; happily they are not offended when refused." In addition, he stated that if the Gros Ventres were less importunate he would willingly entitle them the Flatheads of the Missouri "as they have something of their simplicity and bravery." He considered that "the Piegans are the most civilized but the most noted thieves; the Blood well made and generally less dirty; while the Blackfeet proper are, it is said, the most hospitable." Among all four tribes Father Point found the disproportion of sexes great, and attributed to warfare the preponderance of women over men.[64]

The heart of the area held by the Gros Ventres at that time, and claimed by them subsequently at least until the establishment of the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1873, and probably until 1888, was described by Hayden as follows: "At present [1862] and for many years past, they range along the Milk River, on the east side of the Missouri, extending as far as the Cypress Mountains. From this line to the Marias River stretches a beautiful level country well covered with grass and adapted to pasturage of buffalo. Here the Indians under consideration may be found at all seasons—in the winter along the banks of the Milk River where wood may be obtained and in summer on the plains where fuel is not so necessary."[65] As the Gros Ventres were by no means confined to this area they were in intermittent conflict with surrounding tribes.

With a view to settling the quarrels of the Blackfoot, Piegan and Gros Ventres east of the mountains, and of the Flathead, Kootenais and Nez Percé and others west of the mountains, Governor Stevens held a council with the Gros Ventres on the Milk River in August, 1853, and with the Blackfoot and Piegan at Fort Benton in September.[66] In 1854, he ordered a thousand dollars worth of goods from Culbertson of the American Fur Company, for distribution to the Piegan and Gros Ventres. These goods, consisting mainly of foodstuffs with which they were un-

[64] Father Point's letter of 1847, in De Smet, pp. 254, 256.
[65] Hayden, p. 340.
[66] Hoopes, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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175 ●648 familiar, were given to the Gros Ventres at the Milk River. In spite of warnings, the Indians ate the food uncooked, with the result that many became sick and several died. A creole Frenchman, living among them at the time, persuaded the Gros Ventres that they had been poisoned deliberately, and some of the warriors wanted to go after Culbertson with the intention of killing him. Fortunately, however, Culbertson was so well known to and liked by most of the Gros Ventres that the rasher members of the tribe were restrained from carrying out this project.[67]

Stevens concluded in 1855 a treaty at the Judith River whereby the Blackfoot Nation (including the Gros Ventres) agreed that their territory should be a common hunting territory for all signatories. The United States agreed to spend $20,000 each year for 10 years in provisions for the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot, Piegan and Blood, and $15,000 a year for ten years in instructing them in agriculture and mechanical pursuits, educating their children, and so on. The non-signatory tribes were the Crow, Assiniboine and Sioux.[68]

Although it was reported that the good will among the tribes was remarkable, and that peace was sincerely desired, raiding parties continued very much as before. In addition, more and more whites were encroaching on the territory supposed to have been reserved for the use of the Blackfoot tribes and Gros Ventres. Gold was discovered within the area about 1862, and Lewis has given a cogent summary of events which led up to Piegan enmity toward both Gros Ventres and whites, and which culminated in war, 1866–70.[69]

The End of the Buffalo Days (1870–1890).

136 175 648 The end of the buffalo days was now rapidly approaching. The completion of the Union Pacific railroad in 1869 split the northern and southern herds of buffalo. With the presence of increasing numbers of commercial white hunters, armed with long-range repeating rifles, the end of the great north herd was beginning in 1876. It was not, however, until 1880 that slaughter was universal

[67] Bradley, p. 271.
[68] Hoopes, pp. 113–15.
[69] O. Lewis, pp. 62–66.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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over the area. The Gros Ventres had the benefit of buffalo hunting a trifle longer than the other groups. All the buffalo in Montana were in February, 1882, in their territory, between the Milk River and the Bear Paw Mountains. The hunting season, of October 1882 to February 1883, finished the annihilation of the great northern herd and left only stragglers, merely a few thousands.[70] By August, 1883, both the Blackfoot and the Crow Agencies reported that all game was gone from their respective reservations, and a letter from the Fort Belknap Agency stated that game there "was practically exhausted."[71] In 1884 the Blackfoot and Crow agencies reported that the buffalo was extinct.[72] After ceding more land, in 1888 the limits of the Fort Belknap Reservation, which the Gros Ventres share with the Assiniboine, were finally fixed.[73]

Missionary endeavors, carried on by the Jesuit Fathers, had begun in earnest only in 1885. Prior to that time contact with missionaries had been sporadic. Father Point in 1846–47 had been well received and sent in a good report of this tribe. When Father Giorda attempted to go among them in 1862, however, Bull Lodge took him prisoner and stripped him of his possessions. Since his captivity did not last longer than a few weeks, and his property was restored to him, several months later he made another attempt. This time, while there was some opposition at first, he was permitted to baptize over a hundred children. Subsequently Fathers Rappagliosi and Grassi made several visits respectively, and at considerable intervals. Finally, after some preliminary negotiations, Father Ebershweiler established permanent residence in 1885, and the school at St. Paul's was opened in 1887. The mission and school flourished. In 1891 the founder was replaced by Father Flusi, assisted by Father Sansome.[74]

The Gros Ventres population—always small, relative to that of surrounding tribes—was steadily declining. Hayden's estimate of 1853 placed the total at 2520.[75] In 1883, at the time of the

[70] Hornaday, pp. 492, 506, 510–11.
[71] Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1883–1915, pp. lx, 98.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 109.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[74] Palladino, pp. 187, 195–96, 230, 232, 235.
[75] Hayden, p. 344. Gros Ventres today claim their number was then 10,000.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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CHAPTER II

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The greater bulk of our material on the Gros Ventres covers the fifty year span from about 1835 to 1885. During that period, the tribal territory centered about the Milk River. The present Reservation, the boundaries of which were finally fixed in 1888, represents only a small part of the land claimed and held by the Gros Ventres as their own.

Band Names and Affiliation

The political organization of the Gros Ventres was simple. The division into fairly autonomous bands was basic, and apparently the number of bands was twelve. Our informants, both those who were adult and those who were children, at the time when the whole tribe still encamped as a unit, agreed on that point. The list of band names given by our two oldest informants, Coming Daylight (b. 1854) and Singer (b. ca. 1856), is as follows: Coffees, Same as Assiniboine, Plenty Bad, Greys, Fast Travelers, Water Horses Once a Day, Upper Quarters, Frozens, Buffalo Overloaded, Tendons, Bloods, Night Hawks. These two old women maintained that, in their own experience, the bands camped in this order, and in a circle, when the whole tribe was together.

Quite independently of the above list, another was obtained from The Boy (b. 1870). As a child he witnessed the formation of the camp circle, and he knows many details of previous decades from his father, Lame Bull (b. ca. 1825, d. 1890) and from other old men. The Boy's list agrees with that given by the two women, except in regard to one band. He includes a group called Poor Greys and omits Night Hawks. All of our informants insisted that the Greys and Night Hawks were distinct bands, but there was a difference of opinion as to whether or not the Greys and Poor Greys were in reality the same band.

Seven of the band names can be identified with Kroeber's num-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

861 and tell them what is right." Coming Daylight gave an account of an occasion on which she was disobedient. "One of my relatives was very ill and my grandmother thought that if I would sacrifice a finger joint, he would get well. But I was a small girl, and I dreaded the idea of having part of my finger cut off, so I ran away. My uncle chased after me and told me never to come back. I yelled at him: 'I won't come back, but I am not going to have my finger cut off!' So I went far off and stayed out in the hills until my uncle came looking for me and brought me home again. Two nights after they had asked me to give up my finger, the relative died, but they didn't punish me."

[858] If a child were really lazy or "pouted too much," he might be "thrown out"—cases were mentioned where this had actually happened. The theory was that the child would then have to work much harder than he would have at home for whoever would take him in.

In the case of temper tantrums on the part of a very young child, he was first simply told to stop. Should he continue, his guardian would say: "Oh well, he doesn't know any better" and then douse him with cold water. It was said that he would get up immediately after that type of treatment, and would soon be cured.

If a child were naughty or made a mistake, his guardian would usually not reprimand him in public. He would wait for an opportunity to get him alone. As an example, in training for proper attitudes and behavior between brother and sister, the boy was told: "Be careful what you say in front of your sister." If the boy then made some remark he should not have made in the presence of his sister, his mother waited until the sister had gone out and then talked to him in a gentle way. Cora expanded on this by stating: "The Gros Ventres never bawl out anybody in front [648] of a third party. This is where the white social workers make their biggest mistake. They get everybody together in a central place and then proceed to reprimand the various ones in front of all the others. That is the worst thing that can happen—it hurts these Gros Ventres so badly."

Nevertheless, those in authority may give a severe "tongue lashing" to the culprit in private. As The Boy said when discussing discipline: "The Indian, when he was living the old life, had a

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

palms outward (about as in the breast stroke for swimming), and while doing so would say: "We don't need you now. Go this way. Go this way." And the thunderclouds would spread and separate, and miss the camp. 789

Once when Thick's brother, Horse Capture, had vowed a Crazy Dance and it was about to start, a big electric storm threatened. So Horse Capture filled a pipe and went to Bull Lodge and said: "Here, old man, is a pipe." "What is it for?" asked Bull Lodge. "I want you to break up this storm," Horse Capture replied. "We don't want a storm when we start on our doings." "Well," said Bull Lodge, as he took the pipe, "That is easy." The storm was then coming pretty close. Bull Lodge did nothing but smoke the pipe, and when through smoking handed it back to Horse Capture, saying: "There is not going to be a drop of rain and you are not going to have any rain for four days." And just at this instant, the thundercloud split in two and went around, by-passing the camp. Whether Bull Lodge averted this storm by reason of his keeper or ex-keeper powers or of special personal ones is not however clear from our informant on the incident, Thick.

Charles Buckman gave us another illustration of Bull Lodge's power over storms, a power associated with the keepership. The story was told Buckman by his present wife's father, old Spotted Bird. There was a very severe and prolonged rain storm, it was cold, and the horses were dying. The Gros Ventres were camped with the Crow. The Crow offered Bull Lodge a pipe to stop the storm and he agreed: "All right, I will see what I can do." So he got his Feathered Pipe drum, fixed a smudge, and started to sing a certain song, saying: "After I sing the third song, go and see how the weather looks." So they began singing and by the time he sang the fourth song, the storm was over and the sun was shining. [648]

When a big thunderstorm came, or too much rain, the people would appeal to the keeper to stop it. He would make a smudge and talk to the Pipe and, without mentioning the Last Child or the sun, ask that the storm or rain cease, and it would stop. The smudging consisted of or included taking a pinch of sweet pine, motioning with it, dropping all but a little of it in the fire, and putting this remaining bit on the top of his head. The weather

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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778 they wiped us out." After this war in which so many of the Gros Ventres were killed, the survivors moved off leaving this pipe, and Cut-Away's pipe (see below), and "the remains of a third one" (Small Drum's apparently, see below), in a lodge all nicely fixed up.

In Coming Daylight's father's big lodge were two other pipes, one owned by Stabber's father, Small Drums, the other by Cut-Away, or All-Cut-Off. The place of Small Drums' pipe was to the west of her father's pipe, that of Cut Away's to the east. No further details on these two pipes were obtainable, apart from their final disposition mentioned above.

The last Gros Ventre Beaver Pipe of which we obtained record was buried with its last keeper, Weasel Bear, the father of Stiffarm.

778 On the two other "great" pipes previously mentioned as known to The Boy, only the most meager information was obtainable.
●648 One of these two was gotten by a Gros Ventre man from Bird Tail Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains. The other, of unknown origin, was in the possession of the Gros Ventres long ago when Lame Bull was a boy and was given, he told The Boy, to the Piegan. The Boy one Fourth of July saw the Piegan "having doings with this pipe."

On the two pipes rated by The Boy as of "less importance," our data are likewise meager. One of these, "a common pipe," was a gift from the Crow. At one time at least it was in the possession of Black Bird. It was procured a few years ago, from one of the sons of the last keeper, by Richard Pohrt, hailing from Flint, Michigan.

The other of the two was a gift from the Hidatsa (called "Lower Gross Ventres" by the present-day Gros Ventres of Montana) or the Mandan. It was called watä:nuta (some kind of black bird) and is generally spoken of as "the pipe of Big Beaver" who was its last [and only?] keeper and with whom it was buried. According to Takes the Bow, the Gros Ventres, not so long ago, had gone east beyond their own territory and encountered these "Lower Gros Ventres." The two parties stopped some distance apart and by use of the sign language discovered who each were. The "Lower Gros Ventres" were glad to meet the Gros Ventres, for

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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the two tribes had never been at war. In token of this, the "Lower Gros Ventres" gave the Gros Ventres a pipe to bind the two tribes together, the principal men of each tribe having met together in the middle ground between the parties. In late years some "Lower Gros Ventres" came on a visit to the Fort Belknap agency to inquire about the pipe and to take it back. But the pipe could not be found in the grave of Big Beaver with whom it had been buried.

According to Singer, her father, Bird Chief, had a pipe given by the Sioux or Assiniboine. On a war expedition against the Piegan on which he had taken it, when the Piegan were pressing the Gros Ventres badly, he gave the pipe to his youngest brother who was captured with it, but let go. The pipe however was kept by the Piegan. This happened when Singer was a very small girl.

Relative Dignity and Popularity of the Sacred Pipes

All our informants were fully agreed that the Flat and Feathered Pipes far outranked in sacredness, dignity, power and popularity any and all of the other Gros Ventre sacred pipes.

There were, however, some differences of view among our informants as to the relative status of the Flat and Feathered Pipes themselves. These differences of view, traceable in part to informants' respective affiliations and preferences, were comparatively minor, and are largely reconcilable if we distinguish between what we may call "popular devotion" on the one hand and "liturgico-dogmatic" order of dignity on the other,—a distinction commonly discernible in religious life of other peoples of the world.

As regards "popular devotion," the two Pipes appear to have received about the same number of offerings, vowed and unvowed, from the people, and some Gros Ventres made it a practice rarely or never to cover or robe one of the two Pipes without at the same time covering the other. Some Gros Ventres, while holding both Pipes as superlatively sacred, thought the Feathered Pipe to be in certain respects more powerful, since it, unlike the Flat Pipe, had never been captured by the enemy and since, they held, those bands or groups who, when the tribe separated, followed the Flat

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

525 Women (and men?) also gambled at ring-and-pin, the "ring" being made of four bones from deer feet.[4] The contest was mostly just for fun; the losers would have to "cook" for the winners.

Several types of bow and arrow contests, serving as archery practice as well as gambling sports, were indulged in by boys, young men, and sometimes older men, not, however, by girls or women. Both distance and accuracy contests occurred. In the latter, the target was a stick or arrow stuck upright in a small mound, or an arrow shot by one contestant a desired distance, say, 100 or 150 yards. In another kind of contest, a bow was set slanting, string upward; the string was vibrated by an arrow and the arrow on release flew toward the target about 35 or 40 feet away. In these bow and arrow contests, the wagers were small, usually arrows, sometimes a bow. Wagers were made by the players, and at times by onlookers too.

The modern 4-button hand game, distinct from the earlier 2-button one, is played more for fun than for winnings. At most the losers may be expected to [177] "cook" for the winners. This modern non-gambling hand game came to the Gros Ventre through an Arapaho, Dances All Night, in 1897, shortly after the [168] time the Ghost Dance was introduced among them (in 1891). The Ghost Dance itself had little popularity among the Gros Ventre and after a couple of years died out among them, but the non-gambling hand game took root and survived. At first, we were informed, it was played with two buttons, but after 1903 with four.

525 178 Gambling at playing cards, sometimes for large stakes, occurs today, but usually at the nearby white settlements, between Gros Ventre and white males. Some of the older Gros Ventre are shrewd poker players, and the younger ones play poker among themselves, but we obtained no record of ruinous stakes at cards among the Gros Ventre themselves on the reservation.

Major Gambling Games and Sports

525 The three more important gambling games and sports of half a century or more ago were races, the wheel game, and the 2-button hand game.

1. *Races*

[575] [648] On horse races, usually between the two soldier-police societies, the Stars and Wolves (the latter became later the "Grass Dancers"), or between the Gros Ventre and other tribes, such as the Piegan, at intertribal gatherings, were placed large bets—horses, saddles, and so forth—by the men, not however by

4 Illustration in Culin, *op. cit.*, fig. 706, p. 537.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, Lame Bull did not lose his temper. 525 572 578 538

When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre." 525 648 538

The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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525 ●648 538 he prayed to I[x]tcibiniq'i'à, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may beat this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed, he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel, and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp. And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off. So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying: "You'll need these."

3. The 2-Button Hand Game

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstanding enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of participation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially intertribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing: "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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525 would switch the button to the other hand without Lame Bull perceiving it, and
789 Lame Bull could not guess him.

So as the two grew up, Lame Bull always bet when Keg was playing and won
539 a lot of stuff that way. Keg started gambling from his boyhood and always had luck. After he grew up, however, he did not have many chances to play, because everybody, knowing his power, shied away from gambling against him. But when he did play, he would win. When he was resorting to his power in a game, he would imitate the hissing, swishing noise made by the prairie chickens when they ruffle their tail feathers. The prairie chicken had also given Keg its windpipe to use (apparently as a button) in the hand game, and for it Keg used a little metal spring resembling the windpipe.

525 *Narrative 3.* During the lifetime of Red Whip (d. 1912), the Gros Ventre on
789 one occasion, about 1873-75, met the Flathead where Lewistown (Montana) now is
539 and camped close together. The latter asked the former to gamble at the hand
648 game. So when night came, they all assembled in a big lodge. The Flathead had a great gambler, nicknamed Crazy Child, who had gambling power and had never been beaten by anyone on the west side of the Rockies. Outside the lodge the young men of both tribes were visiting in a friendly fashion together, and the Flathead young men told the Gros Ventre young men: "Don't get into that game. Our man cannot be beaten," and some of the latter on that account refrained from betting. But the Gros Ventre had a man of their own, Red Whip, who had gambling power from a ghost, greater gambling power than Crazy Child had.

So the hand game started, with big stakes wagered on both sides. Neither champion showed his prowess right away; they just let themselves run along easily for a while. At last Red Whip decided to cut loose: "This Flathead makes me mad. He has hand game power. So I'll have to use mine. Give me a piece of weasel skin and I'll stop his power." They gave him a piece and he rubbed off a small bit of it and put it on the ground and knelt on it with one knee.

Crazy Child, whose hand-game helper was the owl, used every trick his helper had taught him, to hide the button and battle Red Whip, but to no avail, for Red Whip's ghost helper was more powerful than Crazy Child's owl helper. Then Red Whip, when his turn came to hide, said to the Gros Ventre, "I have this Flathead beaten and I know his helper, the owl, has abandoned him; so sing good and loud and beat time fast and lively," and to the Flathead, "Watch closely, and I will let you hunt for the button after I have hidden it." Red Whip then put on a big show, exhibited the button to the Flathead, threw it into the air, and told him to look for it. Crazy Child hooted like an owl and did all sorts of other things like an owl, but finally gave up: "I can't find the button," at which the Gros Ventre cheered uproariously. Then Red Whip got up, showed the Flathead the button, which was embedded in the lodge pole to the left of the door as you go out, and asked him to pull it out. Crazy Child tried to pull it out but failed, but Red Whip pulled it out easily, and said to Crazy Child: "You are nothing. You are just a little fellow. You don't amount to much. I didn't have to try hard to beat you. But I just wanted to show you this."

This great game lasted one whole night; daylight was breaking when the two

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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men called on their helpers. The Gros Ventres won many things of value: many best horses, guns, and clothes; and no Gros Ventre ever gambled against Red Whip after that.

Men, women, and children could participate in a hand game played by men. 525
All, with an exception or two to be noted, could bet thereon, and men and women could bet on both sides. In a game where the men were players, the women would be present and would join in the singing as well as in the betting, but they could not be guessers, hiders, or tally keepers; only men could be such. Women, however, could so function in hand games among themselves.

Actual participation in hand game gambling was high. One of our women informants, Mrs Warrior, never went in for betting, she emphasized; but she seems to have been rather exceptional in this regard. Our other woman informant on gambling, Mrs Sleeping Bear, was much devoted to gambling, for relatively small stakes. Nearly every one, so far as we could make out from our evidence, seems to have gambled, either frequently and habitually or at least from time to time.

Participation, however, followed a well-defined and established pattern as regards who could or should bet with or against whom and for what kind of stakes. For convenience we are calling this the "bettor-wager pattern."

Some persons or classes of persons could not gamble at all or could not gamble against certain others; others could or would gamble against certain others only for refreshments or a meal; others, for small stakes of little value; others still, for big stakes. The Gros Ventre bettor-wager pattern at first glimpse looks complicated, but actually it conforms to a few very simple principles. We shall look first at the pattern itself; afterwards at the principles.

Blood relatives could not gamble against each other either for large or for 602
small stakes. Such blood relatives included parents and children, grandparents 525
and grandchildren, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, and also all classificatory relatives of the same categories. At most a group of blood relatives might engage in a hand game with the half-serious half-playful agreement that the losing side would "cook" for the winning side. A given gambling team would commonly be composed chiefly of members who were kin to one another, but non-relatives could also be on the team; the opposing team would likewise be commonly composed chiefly of another kinship group. Where blood relatives gambled in the same game for small or large stakes, they always gambled and bet, not against one another, but on the same side, and in wagering they bet on and backed their own kinsman or kinsmen, wagering dyadically against fellow tribesmen or aliens not related to them.

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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621 Members of one band could and not infrequently did gamble both for small
525 and for big stakes against members of other bands, just as one kinship group used to gamble against others. Tribal we-feeling certainly existed, but seemingly not as intense as band we-feeling, just as, in turn, the latter was not as intense as kin we-feeling. In inter-band, as in inter-kin, gambling, spectators, if they bet at all, would lay their wagers on the players of their own band, as required by band loyalty, regardless of the relative skill and reputation of the contesting players or teams.

575 For Gros Ventre men who had reached full adulthood and were still in the
[885] prime of life, there were two age-societies, called the Stars and the Wolves (or
525 Wolf-men). These two groups, with soldier-police functions, would join forces when necessary in keeping order, in fighting fires, and in defending the whole tribe against enemies, but for the rest rivalry between them was pretty keen. Stars would gamble against Wolves in big games for large stakes, but ordinarily a Star would not gamble against a Star or a Wolf against a Wolf, except for refreshments or a smoke or similar trifling "stakes." Inasmuch as membership in the two societies cut across the lines of kinship and band membership, inter-society gambling suffered an important restriction: if a Star were gambling in a given game, his relatives among the Wolves would not play or bet against him in that particular game. Kinship ties took precedence over society ties.

525 Gros Ventre would of course gamble for big stakes against members of other
● 648 tribes with whom they happened to be at the time on sufficiently good terms, or at least not bitterly and actively hostile, to meet and foregather peacefully, such as the Piegan, Flathead, Nez Percé, and Cree. In such intertribal contests they would often go out to win every possession of their opponents.

572 The Gros Ventre distinguished three kinds of friends: ordinary friends,
525 true or pledged friends, and enemy or war friends. As a rule ordinary close friends would not take opposite sides in a big gambling game. This was all the more true of pledged friends. Two boys, for instance, who liked each other
[608] and who had perhaps grown up together would, though belonging to different bands, enter into a sort of "sworn brotherhood," give each other presents, exchange intimate confidences, and promise, without religious rite of any kind, to stand by each other always, even to death if necessary. Two girls could also enter into a similar pact. Such "true" or pledged friends never gambled against each other either as players or as backers, at least never for stakes of value.

Of enemy or war friends we have previously spoken when describing the wheel game. Two enemy friends would gamble against each other for small stakes or big, the bigger the better. In fact a hand game for big stakes between

4: Flannery & Cooper E-5 (1939-1945) 1946
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525 we-group altruism, cohesion, and loyalty, the more gambling and the greater the
571 stakes and vice versa.

Two less important, secondary determinants were the rules of avoidance and respect on the one hand and those of familiarity and license on the other. In general, the greater the degree of avoidance and respect demanded between two persons or classes, the less gambling and the smaller the stakes; the greater the degree of familiarity and license permitted, the more gambling and the bigger the stakes.

A fourth determinant was the element of the sacred (and/or ascetic) associated with certain offices and with the persons occupying them, an element which barred gambling by and/or against these persons, namely, pipe keepers and ritual grandfathers.

A fifth determinant was obviously in operation, although the field evidence therefor is not abundant. We got no record, however, of Gros Ventre gambling with their ancient, hereditary and bitter enemies, the Sioux. Gambling, even to
● [648] strip opponents completely, presupposes a minimum of friendliness between the players, or at least the absence of deadly and unqualified hostility.

If we diagram along a horizontal belt the full range of human relationships from unqualified friendliness and altruism on the extreme left through the various gradations to unqualified hostility and malevolence on the extreme right, Gros Ventre gambling may be represented on this belt as absent from the extreme left end, gradually increasing in frequency and in size of stakes as we pass along the central section toward the right, and then suddenly dropping and completely disappearing near the extreme right end.

Besides these five determinants or conditioning factors in Gros Ventre gambling, there were perhaps others, but this is as far as our evidence and our analysis thereof have gone. Of course, one cannot have gambling without some kind of close-range or long-range contact between the gamblers, without some kind of property or other valued thing to wager, and so forth, but working out a list of such requisites would be labor lost.

Before leaving this subject, we should emphasize that, while the preceding pages have referred particularly to the bettor-wager pattern as holding for the hand game, the same pattern held as well for all other Gros Ventre gambling games and contests.[7]

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525] 7 In our world sources on gambling we have noted only two explicit references, and these extremely brief, to the bettor-wager pattern: G. Goodwin, *The Social Organization of the Western Apache* (Chicago, 1942), p. 375, "certain types of gambling" are prevented "between members of the same clan," for it would be "like winning it [property] from yourself"; R.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
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Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, —Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.